The Krakus' and Wanda's Burial Mounds of Cracow

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The author presents the Krakus and the Wanda's burial mounds in the vicinity of Cracow, Poland. He has established that the connection between the figures of the Cracow legend and both mounds is more than just a product of 15th century literature, but originates from a much earlier tradition. Archaeological excavations of the Krakus' mound indicated that the mound originates from the 9th and the 10th century. According to the author, the pagan peoples living along the Visla river created these mounds in the very center of their state as a response to the advancing Christianity from neighboring Moravia.

The existence of two monumental burial mounds called Krakus' Mound and Wanda's Mound in the environs of Cracow is a significant piece of evidence that this place was the prinipal center of rule in Little Poland in tribal times. One of the most important questions in the history of the mounds is whether these can be linked with prince Krak and his doughter Wanda - characters from the Cracowian myths - or whether this link is the result of an interpretation undertaken in the 15th century, when nameless mounds were connected with the characters from the myth.

Two states were established on contemporary Polish territory at the end of the early Middle-Ages: the state of Polanians with a center in Gniezno and the state of Vistulanians with a center in Cracow. The testimonies concerning the rulers of the latter are so scare that in the sources from that time even their names are not preserved (MPH, vol.1, 1960, p.11; Alfred, ch.12, p.66; Żywot Metodego, ch.XI, 2-3, p.111; cf. J.Leśny, 1977, p.489-491).

The foundation of the Polish state was accomplished by the Piast dynasty which ruled in Gniezno over the Polanians. The state of the Vistulanians which existed in the second half of the 9th century was defeated and probably liquidated by the rulers of Great Moravia. At the beginning of the 10th century, Little Poland was a part of the Czech state. Finally, at least at the very end of the 10th century, the former Vistulanian territory was included into the Polish state ruled by the Piast dynasty (cf. Łowmiański, 1963-1985, vol.4, p.445-532, vol.5, p.548-575; Labuda, 1988, p.257-260).

Despite the quick disappearing of the Vistulanians from the scene of history, two mythical traditions about the legendary origins of the Polish state survived among Polish sources: one of them connected these origins with the Piast dynasty and the Polanian town of Gniezno (Banaszkiewicz, 1986; Dalewski, 1991, s.33-34), and the second one with Vistulanians and the town of Cracow and the prince Krak (Römer, 1872; Brückner, 1901; Słupecki, 1993), who is however a character unknown from early-medieval accounts.

In the area of Gniezno there are no traces of monumental burial mounds and we

find no information in written sources that such burial mounds existed in that area in the past. Whereas in the environs of Cracow there exist two burial mounds of that kind. These mounds are situated at a relatively large distance one from another (9 km), and are separated by the Vistula river (Fig. 1).

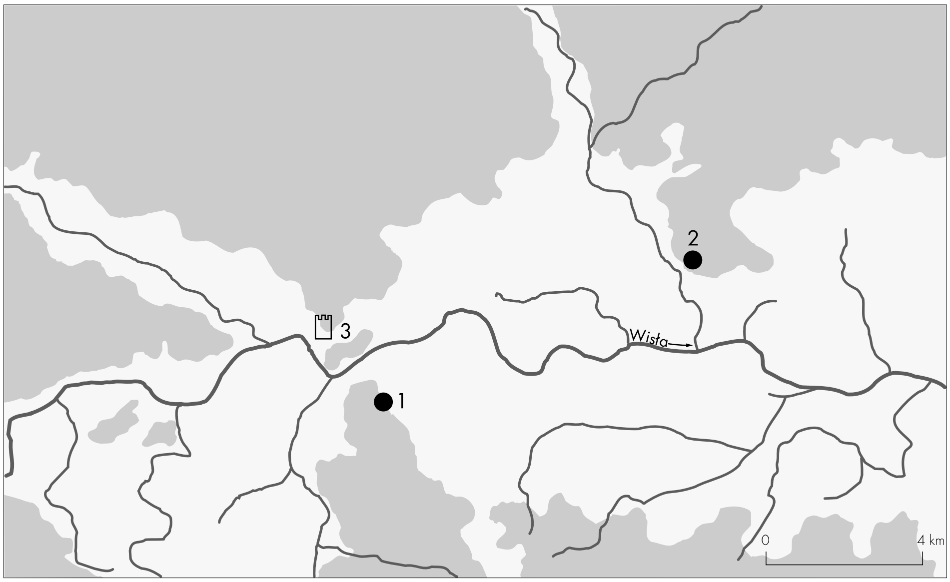


Fig. 1 - The great bourial mounds in the enviroment of Cracow: 1. Krakus' Mound 2. Wanda's Mound 3. Wawel Castle.

Krakus' mound

The first of the burial mounds in the environs of Cracow is called Krakus' mound. It is situated at the top of Lasota mount (271 m above sea level) in the mountain chain called Krzemionki. On another top of this hill, separated by a lower area (through which nowadays there is a railroad), the small church of St Benedict is situated. Krakus' mound has the shape of a cone with a cut-off top. It is 16 m high, and the diameter of its base is 60 m long. The cubage of the mount is approximatly 18,000m^3 (Jamka, 1965, s.189-190).

The second burial mound is called Wanda's mound. It is situated on the culmination of the river-terrace on the left side of the Vistula (238m above sea level). It is 14 m high and the diameter of its base is 50-m-long (Zoll-Adamikowa, 1977, p.314). The mound is situated at the inlet of the small river Dłubnia to the Vistula. Late-medieval sources recorded the tradition that those two mounds in the area of Cracow were the burial mounds of prince Krak and his daughter Wanda.

But it is possible to find some traces of this tradition already at the turn of the 12th century. Master Vincent, who first recorded the legend about Krak in his Chronica Polonorum, asserts that Krak had established the Polish state with a center in Cracow area. Krak, in later versions of the legend, is known as the heros-eponymous and founder of the town. In Master Vincent's Chronicle he is the founder of the state (but not the

town). According to this chronicle Cracow was established - after the kiling of a dragon and the death of the old ruler - by his subjects, and received the name Cracow in memory of the old prince.

I am of the opinion (Słupecki, 1993) that the whole contents of legend were not included in the chronicle of Master Vincent, who had chosen only some motives from the story. This is evident from the fragment about the last moments of Krak's reign. The chronicler gave a relatively full description of the fight of Krak's sons with the dragon. He mentioned that one of them motivated by the desire to rule himself, killed his brother after the victory over the beast, and for a short time succeeded his father. But very soon his crime came to light and he was punished by death or banishment. This account is followed by the mention of the funeral of Prince Krak. And, as the chronicler adds: "The funeral ceremonies wouldn't stop, until the finishing of the construction of the town ended them" (Master Vincent, I, 7). Neither the circumstances of the death of the old ruler, nor the details of the funeral are mentioned. But it should be assumed that already in Master Vincent's time the tradition pointed to the burial mound mentioned later under Krak's name as his tomb.

In the thirties of the 15th century Jan Dąbrówka, professor of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, in his Commentary to Master Vincent's Chronicle adds the following gloss to the description of Krak's funeral: "his corpse was buried in an elevated place, where nowadays is St Benedict Mount" (Zwiercan, 1969, p.125). This is a reference to Lasota Mount. The first testimony of the existence of this church is to be found in a document dated 1254, in which the "mons ante Cracouiam cum ecclesia sancti Benedicti" is mentioned (KDKK, no 40, p.53; cf. LB, vol.3, p.70). But the church is older. Excavations discovered that under the present building traces of a small rotunda from the 11th century can be found (K. Żurowska, 1988, s.116, 121).

The informations of Master Vincent and Jan Dąbrówka were used by Jan Długosz. In his chronicle he states that Krak "only in old age finished his life", and the episode of fratricide among his sons (separated from the motive of the fight with the dragon) appears written by Długosz after death of Krak. In that version of the legend the funeral of Krak was tended to by both his sons. Długosz wrote that to honour Krak "a high mount from sand was elevated as his grave". The gentlemen and the people together "according to the customs of that time buried his corpse with due honour on the Lasota Mount, which faces the city of Cracow. Krak's sons elevated his grave, to make it more enduring and eternal, and to ensure that the descendants would not forget about it; they elevated it on the top of the hill according to his own instructions, given to them when he was still alive, in so ingenious a manner, that its peak would stand out above the hills in the vicinity. The grave elevated with that industry and labour testifies up to this very day the high veneration the Poles have for this great man and their endeavor to hand down his name to posterity and make him immortal" (Długosz, Annales, I, vol.1, 1964, p.127).

Długosz's knowledge extends beyond the information recorded by Master Vincent and Jan Dąbrówka. Let us leave aside the fact that Długosz had relieved Krak's sons from the task of killing the dragon and removed their struggle (ending with fratricide) to the time after the King's death; it should be considered as an attempt to put the legend in logical order. But Długosz gave new, concrete data: the name of the mount (Lasota Mount), and reported the manner in which the burial mound was constructed: the use of an existing natural hill and elevating a mound of sand. The first was easy to deduce from the

position of Krak's Mound in the landscape; however, the correct definition of the material used for the construction of the mound deserves consideration. As the archaeologists found out to their astonishment, the Długosz information was correct (Żurowski, 1935, p.94).

Important data are also to be found on the first illustrations showing this mound (Żurowski, 1935, p.95-96). The A.Lautensack engraving shows the position of the army of Archduke Maximilian around Cracow in 1587 during the siege of this town. The Krakus and Wanda mounds are shown very schematically; this engraving - however - testifies that both these mounds composed important topographical elements of the Cracow area. The peaks of both mounds are crowned by schematically marked crosses.

In 1591 T.Treter inserted to his Regnum Poloniae Icones the portraits of Krak and Wanda, with views of their mounds in windows on the engraving. On both mounds there are some constructions, probably small chapels.

The topography of the Krakus' Mound area is shown in detail around the year 1600 on the engraving by Vischer and Merian, showing a hill with St Benedict church and a

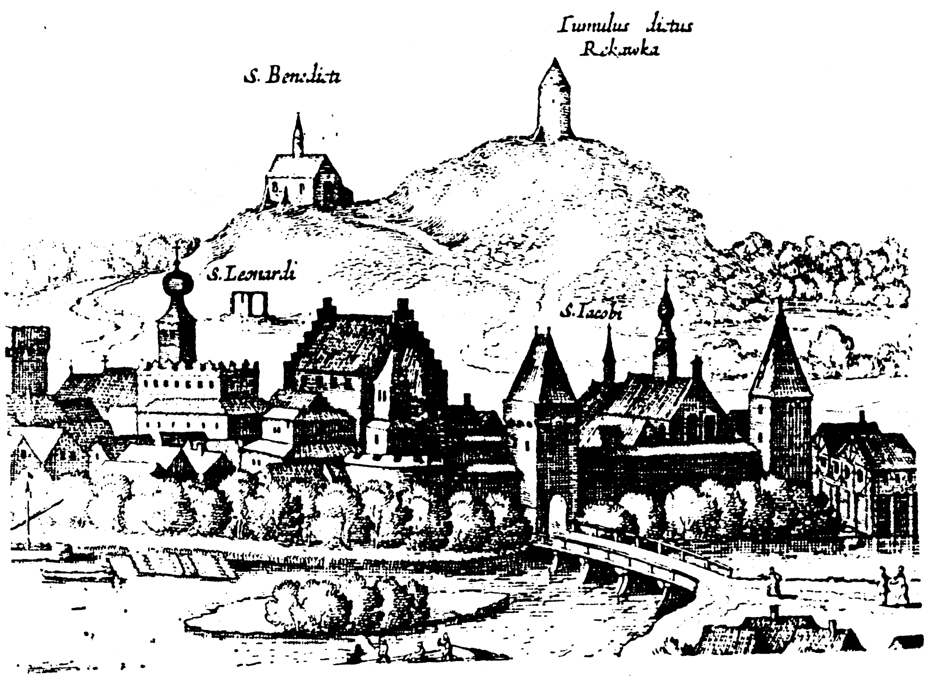


Fig. 2 - Lasota Hill on Mateus Merian engraving, 17th century (after Jamka 1965, p.187).

mound, called there "Tumulus dictus Rękawka" (Fig. 2). Krakus' Mound was then shown on Dahlberg's engraving and in many later illustrations (Żurowski, 1935, p.96).

From the beginning of the 18th century Krakus' Mound appears also on cartographical materials. On the city-plan prepared by Swedes in 1702, Krakus' Mound appears on the Lasota Hill, well distinct in the terrain (Fig. 3). The top of the mound is on this map desolate (Stockholm, Krigsarkivet: Sveriges krig 10: 182a). But at a similar distance as the



Fig. 3 - Fragment from city map of Cracow, made by the Swedish Army in 1702 (Stockholm, Krigsarkivet: Sveriges krig 10: 182a).

St Benedictus church there appears similar, large constructions (if this is not a schematic sign for a mountain). Many later plans are in the collections of Archive of the Old Records of the Town of Cracow (Archiwum Akt Dawnych Miasta Krakowa, cf. Żurowski, 1935, p.96). This plans shows the topography of the mound at the time before the quarry opened in that area and the military forts and the railroad were built, thus causing significant changes in the original topography.

Groups of barrows can be observed in that area on the Austrian plan of Krzemionki from 1797 (Jamka 1965, p.188) showing St Benedict church and "Cracus Hügel" (Fig. 4). Those could be any small burial mounds. Nowadays there are no traces of those barrows in the terrain which was strongly transformed during the 19th century. But a frail trace survived in the written tradition. A smaller mound existed near the Krakus' Mound, known in the early 19th century as the grave of Krakus' grand-mother (R.Jakimowicz, 1934, 30

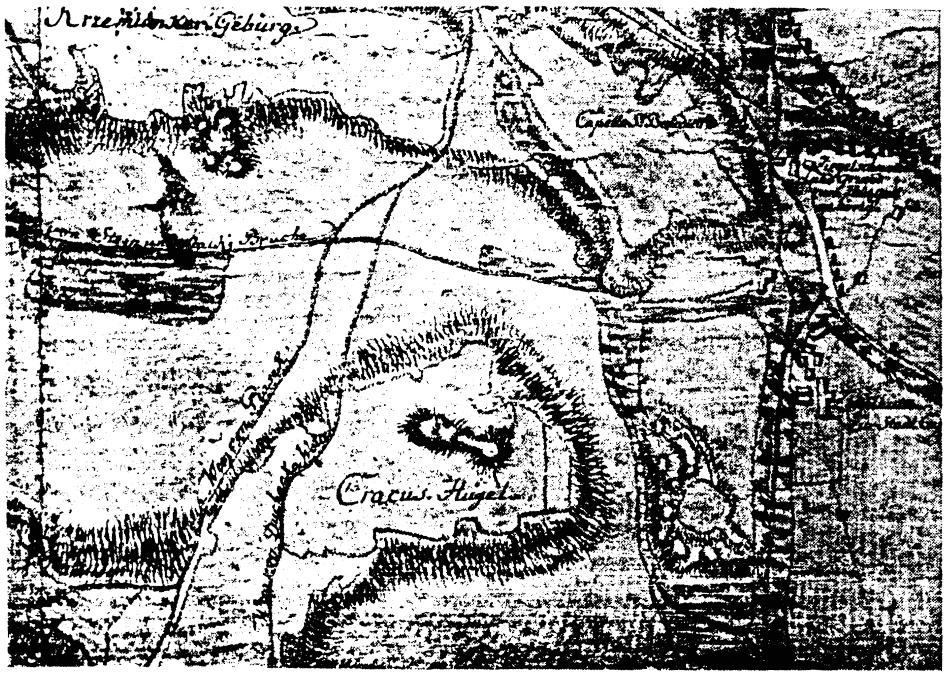


Fig. 4 - Austrian map of Krzemionki Hills from 1797. "Cracus Hügel"; "Capella S. Benedicti" and some traces of barrows around them visible (after Jamka 1965, p.188).

April). It is of course a very late legend but it recorded however a trace of the existence of an intriguing mound in the environs of Krakus' Mound.

Wanda's Mound

The second of the Cracow Mounds is called Wanda's Mound. According to the Cracowian myth - recorded in Master Vincent's Chronicle (I, 7) - Wanda was Krak's daughter (Słupecki, 1993, p.15-17). The attempts to diminish her role to that of a literary character, transferred to Poland by Master Vincent (Kumaniecki, 1925/1926), have brought some important observations on how the myth was elaborated by medieval scholars, but are not convincing on the whole. Wanda, although dressed in foreign clothes, was nevertheless an authentic character from an old Cracowian myth (I have discussed this matter in detail in another paper, cf. Słupecki, 1997).

In Master Vincent's chronicle there is no mention of Wanda's burial mound. But already in 1222, one year before Master Vincent's death, we can find traces of this mound

in charters. Iwo, Master Vincent's successor to the Cracow bishopric (it should be added here that Master Vincent a few years before his death resigned his post and retired to a Cistercian monastery) donated a village to the Cistercian monastery in Kacice. The village was called Mogila sive Tumba, super Dlubna cum omnibus suis appendiciis (ZDMog, nr 2, p.2). Iwo took over the initiative of founding the Cistercian monastery in Kacice from his relative Wisław. The abbey was to be originally located in Prędocin or Kacice, but very quickly it was translated to Mogiła and finally founded in 1226 (Szujski, 1867, p.11-12). In documents this place is from that time on called Claratumba quod vulgariter Mogyla appellatur (ZDMog, nr 4, p.4). On the lands of this village, today within the boundaries of Cracow, is the Wanda's Mound. Unfortunately, nowadays it has the gigantic metallurgical plant in Nowa Huta in the background. The documents quoted here testified that Mogiła (a grave) took its name from the burial mound, because burial mound in the Slavonic language is called "mogila" (Potkański, 1965, p.218).

Already in 1872, K.Römer (1872, p.21) remarked that bishop Iwo and his chapter "were prompted by no other reasons than the same that guided the founders of St Benedict church on Krakus' Mound. They wanted the pagan custom connected with this burial mound to be turned into a Christian one". Exactly as in the case of Krakus' Mound this mound was also considered the memorial of a distinct person, but the name of this person was not written down in the documents.

K.Römer (1872, p.20) found the first trace of connections between this mound in Mogiła with Wanda in Dzierzwa's chronicle. The author of this source written down in 13th/14th century claimed that Poles were the descendants of the old Wandalitae, descendants of the first father Wandalus; from his name was also derived the name of the Wandalus river, in vulgar language called Wisła (Vistula). "Also one mountain, where the aforesaid river Wanda originates is called after his name" (Dzierzwa, I, 8: MPH, vol.2, 1961, p.163; cf. Banaszkiewicz, 1979, p.32-51).

According to Römer (1872, p.20), Dzierzwa thought that Wanda's Mound is the mountain at the foot of the sources of the Vistula river. Only a literal spelling of the name of the river can be considered a serious argument in favour of that idea. Although Dzierzwa is always writing about father Wandalus and the Wandalus river at that one moment there appears - exceptionally in a chronicle - the form Wanda. In the Carpathian Mountains there is no mount of that name. The attempt by G.Labuda to recognize in that name the mountain Giewont in the Tatras (doubtless from German *Ge-Wand) is not convincing, because German colonization in that region at the time when Dzierzwa's Chronicle was being written was only just beginning, and Giewont received its name later. And it is quite impossible to think that a Polish chronicler could place the sources of the Vistula near Cracow.

In Dzierzwa's Chronicle it is rather a reference to the Wandalian Mountains, which sometimes appear in studies of medieval erudits; the latter are known to Joachim Bielski (1597, p.18) who used this name for the mountains where the sources of the Elba are situated, and to Stanisław Sarnicki (1712, p.981), who quoted Cassius Dio in his account about the Wandalian Mountains. Cassius Dio (LV, 1, 3) was the first author to mention the Wandalian Mountains (Łowmiański, 1963-1985, vol.1, p.248).

Thus the first account linking the mound in Mogiła with Wanda is to be found in Jan Dąbrówka. But in his Commentary to Master Vincent's chronicle he reported also a later version of the Wanda-myth, taken from the Wielkopolska Chronicle (ch.1). According to

that version, Queen Wanda paid for her victory by voluntary suicide in the waves of the Vistula. Jan Dąbrówka, after an account of Krak's burial, adds: "Wanda however, who - as it was said above - in that way sacrificed herself to the gods and then emerged from the waters by the doings of the gods, was buried in another mountain by the village Mogiła" (Zwiercan, 1969, p.125-126).

We can find a detailed account in the Annales written by Jan Długosz. According to Długosz (Annales, I, vol.1, 1964, p.132) Wanda, after thanksgivings and prayers to the gods for the victory, "jumped from the bridge into the Vistula in self-sacrifice to the waves of the mentioned Vistula river and died covered by them". Długosz followed in his account the Wielkopolska Chronicle (ch.1), the author of which was the first to say that Wanda paid for her victory by own death. Długosz made the story more picturesque in an interesting way. In the Wielkopolska Chronicle (ch.1), Wanda of her own free will (sponte) jumped into the Vistula, Długosz changed that to: from the bridge (ex ponte) and still of her own free will (Römer, 1872, p.14). At the end of the story Długosz wrote: "She was buried by the river Dłubnia, one mile from Cracow, in a field. And - which for posterity is more astonishing than plausible - a mound was also erected for her, equally eminent to that for her father. A high mound of soil was built, which still today marks her grave, and from that mound the village took its name Mogyla" (Długosz, Annales, I, 1964, s.132).

Długosz mentioned the distance between Cracow and the Wanda's Mound and the name of river Dłubnia, which flows below the Wanda's Mound, a tributary of the Vistula. But it was already noticed by bishop Iwo in his document. The sources of Długosz's account are also to be found in the literary tradition (Master Vincent, Kronika Wielkopolska, Jan Dąbrówka, perhaps the document of bishop Iwo for the Cistercians) and Długosz's own knowledge of the topography of the Cracow area. Długosz stresses - and this is rather rare in his Annales - his personal distance from the legend. That for Wanda a mound equally eminent as for her father was build for the chronicler was worth "more astonishment than credibility". From the commentary of Jan Dąbrówka he omitted the information that the body of the queen emerged from waters. We can see here (apart from reluctance to value equally the role of men and women in history) elements of polemic with the tradition.

The description of Wanda's Mound in Liber Beneficiorum is larger, and Długosz took here more from Jan Dąbrówka. "Mogila Monastery - he wrote - took its name from the nearby village Mogila. The name of the mentioned village however came from the artificially made mound in the form of a pyramid, overlooking the village, where the Polish queen Wanda was buried (Krakus' daughter from whom Cracow took its name, as we know from our ancestors) after she jumped into the Vistula sacrificing herself to the gods. Drowned by the waves, she was buried there, at the place where the dangerous stream brought her. Because the Poles call a burial mound in their language mogiła" (Jan Długosz, LB, t.3, Cracoviae 1864, s.422). The participation of the pagan gods in the emerging of the queen's body from Vistula is also here omitted by Długosz, a cracowian canon, in the description of events.

In the Chronicle of Joachim Bielski (1597, p.32) we can find an illustration showing Wanda jumping with a horse from a bridge into the Vistula (Fig. 5). In the background one can see a church (Cistercian Abbey) and Wanda's Mound with a path leading to the top, bearing a small chapel. The presence of a chapel on the top of the mound is mentioned by Bartosz Paprocki (1584, p.2) and Stanisław Sarnicki (1712, p.1006-1007). Both quoted also the text of a Latin epitaph honoring Wanda, which was to be engraved on the chapel.



Fig. 5 - Engraving from Joachim Bielski Chronicle (1597, p.32) showing Queen Wanda jumping on horse from a bridge into the Vistula. In the background a church (Cistercian Abbey) and Wanda's Mound with a path leading to the top.

A cross appears on the top of the mound already on the first illustration showing this object, i.e. on the same engraving by Lautensack showing the siege of Cracow in 1587, in which the first picture of Krakus' Mound is to be found. A figure with a cross or a small chapel is shown also in a window in the background of Wanda's portrait in Regnum Poloniae Icones by Treter dated 1591 (Żurowski, 1935, p.94-97). A small chapel appears on the top of the mound still in 19th century illustrations showing the mound (Żurowski, 1935, p.97; Łuszczkiewicz, 1899, p.59).

One of the most important questions in the history of the mounds by Cracow is whether these can be linked with Krak and Wanda "from the beginning" in the Cracowian tradition, or whether this link is the result of an interpretation given in the 15th century by Jan Dąbrówka and Jan Długosz, when nameless mounds were connected with the characters from a Cracowian myth, written down by Master Vincent and in the Wielkopolska Chronicle without any mention about these mounds (Brückner, 1901, p.222). In favor of the second theory is the fact that in bishop Iwo's document the name of the village Mogila sive Tumba is written down without any mention of who was buried in this tumba (Gieysztor, 1977, p.311). But this is not a valid argument. The aim of Iwo's document was not to preserve the legend connected with the place, but only to establish a precise location to designate the village. And such a statement sufficed for that purpose. The name Mogiła - however - cannot exist in local tradition with no link to a definite, even mythical, person (Łowmiański, 1963-1985, vol.4, p.456-457). Thus I believe in a link of the mounds with the characters from the Cracowian myth "from times immemorial".

The first historical interpretation of the Krakus' Mound was done by Jan Długosz, who regarded it as proof of the Roman origin of Krakus-Gracchus. According to Długosz (Annales, I, 1964, p.126) "a grave built in that way proves also, that he was Roman, because Romulus, the founder of Rome, had a grave in the shape of a mound built in the same way of stone". Sarnicki (1712, p.1004) was of the opinion that Krak-Krakus - as Roman - wanted to be buried according to the Roman custom" and this mound, changing some letters, was called in the Latin way Mogila instead of moles". And in that way, according to Sarnicki, the word entered to the Polish language. It should be stressed here that, also for Sarnicki, the Krakus' Mound was called Mogiła.

In the 19th century both mounds by Cracow were interpreted as signs of fords, military watch- and signalizing points, cult-places, places of justice and - of course - as burial mounds as well (Rostafiński, 1910, p.36-37; Żurowski, 1934; Reyman, 1964, p.513).

Excavations on the Krakus' Mound

Wanda's Mound was never investigated by archaeologists (Zoll-Adamikowa, 1977). The Krakus' Mound, however, was excavated in 1934-1937. These were, beside the excavations in Biskupin, among the biggest Polish excavations carried out in Poland before the Second World-War. The results were published by Rudolf Jamka (1965).

The excavations were preceded by a thorough review of the results of investigations of similar objects in Europe, as Gamla Uppsala, Jelling, Tcharnaya Mogila in Tchetnihov and the Scythian burial mounds in Ukraine (Żurowski, 1934; Jakimowicz, 1934). Due to that, the removal of the upper layer of the mound one third down from the top, and then the investigation of the remaining part through a decreasing funnel - digging in quarters until the

rock-bed was reached - was accepted as an excavation method. The same method was used in the investigations of burial mounds - including Tcharnaya Mogila - by D.J.Samokvasov (1875, p.2; 1908, p.197-201). It was however a fairly popular method, used once more in 1942 in the excavation in the Southern Mound in Jelling. Samokvasov, nota bene professor of the Russian University in Warsaw, recommended that method in his instruction for excavations of burial mounds (Samokvasov, 1878, p.3). It is possible, that Samokvasov's researches were used as a model for the method of excavations, accepted in Cracow. It was supposed that this method made it possible to keep intact a relatively great part of the original mount, enabling at the same time a good view of the structure of the object and the opportunity to find the possible grave in the middle of the mound (Jakubik, 1934, p.40). But already before the excavations, remarks could be heard that it was not obvious that the grave should be situated in the middle (Żurowski, 1934). One cannot help noticing that although Polish archaeologists knew that excavations of great mounds sometimes yield small results (Jakimowicz, 1934), they hoped that the works on the "Krak's grave" would produce brilliant finds. With regard to that, the results of excavations brought a great disappointment.

When at the bottom of the mound - although a small area of the surface was uncovered - no traces of the expected grave were discovered, and the originally planned funnel was greatly extended. Finally, 60% of the bottom of the mound was unveiled, so from the original cone of the mound there survived only a small collar 4 m high and 7 m wide. (After the excavations the original shape of the monument was reconstructed.) From the bottom of the trench forge even the upper layer of the rock was found (Kotlarczyk, 1979, p.55). But no traces of the grave were found.

The disappointment with the results was so great that these excavations are commonly regarded in Polish archaeology as unsuccessful. R.Jamka (1965, p.209) tried to find the source of the failure in the false method of excavations: he pointed out that the funnel unveiled only a small area of the bottom of the mount. But he forgot that the original idea of excavations was changed and, finally, a large part of the lower part of the mound was excavated. This fact - stressed by Kotlarczyk (1979, p.55-56) - was not presented by Jamka (1965) although the drawings published in his article show the final reach of the excavated area.

It is also possible to assume that in Krakus' Mound no rich grave existed. But that assumption could be verified: a small part of the mound remains unexcavated, and there is little chance of finding something there. The suppositions that such a grave existed in the excavated area - but that it was a robbed grave and that an avarian decoration found in the lower part of the mound was a trace of it (Kostrzewski, 1949, p.235-236) - are not convincing. No traces of grave constructions were identified.

Contrary to common opinion I would stress that although no brilliant finds were discovered in the mound, the excavations really brought interesting results.

Geological research in the area of Krakus' Mound state that it was build on the culmination of a calcareous hill (Nowak, 1934, p.37-40; cf. Kreutz, 1934, p.40-42).

The excavations started from preliminary diggings in the environment of the mound and from levelling and pulling down the Austrian fortifications from the 19th century. During these preliminary works two hoards of coins from modern times (collected during the fortification works and at that time deposited) were found, the dating is established through the latest nineteen-century coins. In the layer coming under the mound, pottery of the Lusatian culture was found (Jamka, 1965, p.194).

The main works began with the pulling down of the upper part ("hut") of the mound to a depth of 5.33 m. On the very top of the mount, traces of the digging for the foundations of a triangulation point were found. These diggings presumably destroyed the traces of the foundation of the small chapel (Jamka, 1965, p.198). In the layer to 1 m deep beneath the top of mound, in two different places, the parts of an childs skeleton and a fragment of a man's cranium were found (Stołyhwo, 1935, p.91-92). Also the traces of a big hearth were found (Jamka, 1965, p.198; Kotlarczyk, 1979, p.58). It is possible to connect it with the illuminations of the mound in modern times.

At the depth 2.00-5.33 m from the top, fragments of a large root system of a great oak were found (Jamka, 1965, p.203-205). The age of the oak was estimated at 300 years (Szafer, 1935, p.91). Between its roots also a piece of birch wood was found. These woodfinds, never dated by C14 or dendrochronology, were used for very free speculations. It was supposed that this oak was a sacred tree which was cut down after the christianisation of the country in the 10th century, and on its place a cross of birch-wood was fixed (Szefer, 1935, p.91). This supposition (with an assumption that the oak was 300 years old) also gave grounds for dating the Krakus' Mound for the years around 700 AD. These speculations were rightly rejected by H.Łowmiański (1963-1985, vol.2, p.374).

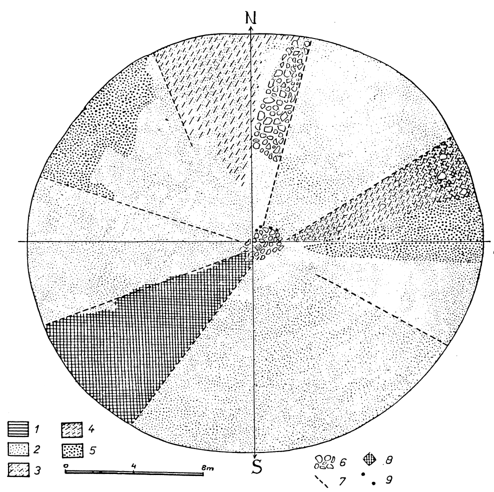


Fig. 6 - Plan of the Krakus' Mound 10 m below the top (after Jamka 1965, plan V). *1.*- loam; *2.*- brightly sand; *3.*- sand with some humus; *4.*- sand with abundance of humus; *5.*- deep-brown sand; *6.*- stones; *7.*- fences; *8.*- central post-hole; *9.*- traces of pickets.

At the depth 3.50 m the first traces of small pickets were revealed. From the depth of 4.00 m they formed regular structures, resembling fences braided from dry wood. The pickets were of oak wood and the twist between them of willow branches (Szafer, 1935, p.90). Such fences appear in many layers of the mound, from the depth of 7.50 m even in very clear structures. The aim of these constructions was perhaps to stabilize the mound (Jamka, 1965, p.207). At the depth 3.50 m there also appears - observed beneath in the deeper layers - the trace of a big post, stuck in the middle of the mound.

In the lower part of the mound, excavated at first only by funnel, at a depth 10 m from the top in the north-east quarter a big concentration of stones in an area of 7 x 2 m was found. The meaning of this concentration has not been explained. At the same 10 m level was very clearly visible a negative of the central post, with a diameter of 40 cm. Around the post-hole many stones were discovered (Fig. 6). At this level the traces of the fences were also found, especially in the northern and eastern parts of the mound. The traces of fences were found beneath at the level of 11 m. At the level of 12 m the post-hole in the middle was still visible (Jamka, 1965, p.211-213). At the level of 15 m the last traces of the central post were observed, and in the south-eastern part of the mount the last traces of the

fences. At the very bottom of the mound a 10 cm thick layer of sand, the rock-bed, was found. In the upper part of this layer some traces of charcoal were found.

According to Rudolf Jamka (1965, p.217) in the north-eastern part of the mound, at a depth of 15.50 m an Avarian belt-fixture was found, which is dated by W.Szymański as being from the 8th century AD (Fig. 7). On the plan of the mound at the depth 15 m this object was marked at the distance of 4 m from the middle of the mound. J.Kotlarczyk (1979, p.60-62) questioned the credibility of this plan, pointing to some inaccuracies in the excavations diary.

In the south-western part of the mound, on the periphery of the excavations funnel an inserted layer of sand with some lumps of loam was observed, which distinguishes it from the environment. The trench was also extended in this part. It has been stated that this is a trace of a robbery digging and holds late-mediaeval materials, e.g. a coin of Czech king Charles IV (Jamka, 1965, p.217-219 and fig. 22 there).

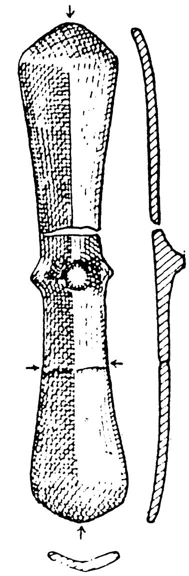


Fig. 7 - Awarian belt-fixture found in the Krakus' Mound (after Jamka 1965, p.217).

Krakus' Mound was built of different materials. Its inner structure was clearly described by Kotlarczyk (1979, p.56-57): "On an intact layer of fluvioglacial sand, covering by a thin mantle the rocky substratum of jurassic chalk stone, was built first a small (1.30 m high) barrow of sand, with a diameter of approximately 15 m. Above that a layer of loam was put, with maximal thickness of 2 m. This mound was about 3 m high and had a diameter of approximately 30 m. Next, a higher mound was heaped up to the height of 12 m which has at the bottom the same diameter as

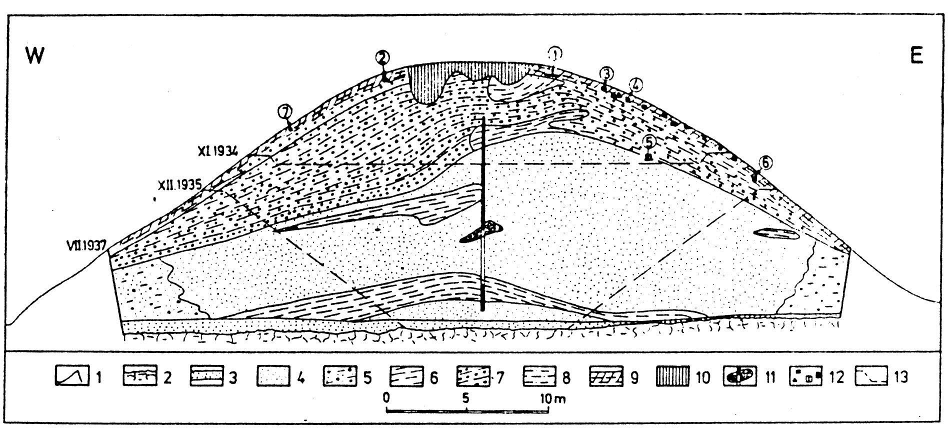


Fig. 8 - Inner structure of Krakus' Mound after J.Barty's drawing (modified by Kotlarczyk 1979, p.57). 1.- the limits of not-excavated parts of the mound; 2.- natural, high-jurassic limestones; 3.- natural sand, fluvioglacial; 4.- sand; 5.- sand, with some clay and stones; 6.- loam; 7.- "cover" of the mound: gravel with clay; 8.- clay; 9.- clay with humus; 10.- disturbed part of the "cover": chalk rubble with humus; 11.- post with surrounding stones; 12.- some archaeological finds, projected to the level of the mound: *1*-fire place; *2*-child's skeleton; *3*-man's cranium; *4*-La Tenne periods pottery fragments; *5*-La Tenne periods iron buckle; *6*-cattle's cranium; *7*-denarius of Czech prince Boleslaus II; 13-the limits of the excavated parts according to the excavating periods.

the mound has today. It is worth stressing that axes of the mounds from sand and from loam are placed excentrically in comparison to each other and to the axis of final shape of the mound. The structure of the sand cover was very sophisticated: from the central post (standing vertically in the axis of the final construction) stretch in an radiant way the partitions (fences) twisted from osier, between them the material for building of the mound was strewn (...). The sand mound was finally covered by a mantle of sedimental materials of layered structure. This layer consists of alternating layers of chalk rubbish, clay, loam and humus. Also in some places traces of fences were found, but it is not sure if this constituted a continuation of the fences from the sand mound beneath or formed an independent structure. All elements described above constituting the structure of the mound (excentric mounds one in the other, the segments of different materials, the mantle of different stone-materials in the upper part of the mound) were intended to keep the mound in stable form and shape. The materials were supplied from a place a few hundred meters away to the south-east, 30 m below the base of the mound (Fig. 8)."

In the layer of sand below the mound, and in the environs pottery of the Lusatian and Pomeranian cultures was found. Only outside the mound this layer includes early-mediaeval and mediaeval pottery. In the inner part of the mound were found flintstone materials, pottery of Lusatian culture, a Halstatt-time iron pin, pottery of Pomeranian culture and Przeworsk culture from its early phase (Kotlarczyk, 1979, p.57), although one of the examples is dated 1-3th century AD (Jamka, 1965, p.210). The mediaeval pottery appears only in the exterior mantle of the mound, until the depth of 1.00 m. Only there do coins appear also, apart from a denarius of the Czech prince Boleslaus II from 10th century, the coins descend from 16th-20th century (Jamka, 1965, p.223).

Conclusions

The investigations of the Krakus' Mound had their weak points but they were not caused by the method of excavations by a funnel but rather from digging by mechanically separated layers of 1 m in thickness. And what is much worse, a part of the documentation is missing and the final publication was prepared by a person who did not conduct the excavation works on the spot but on the basis of incomplete materials. Nevertheless it is possible to reinterpret the results. The pottery of Lusatian and Pomeranian cultures in the layer beneath the mound on the one hand, and the coin from 10th century AD found in the upper mantle of the mound on the other, restrict the chronological boundaries and enable us to consider three possible periods of this foundation: the time of Przeworsk culture, the time of the Migration of Nations, and the early-Middle Ages. J.Kotlarczyk (1979) argued that this mound was build in the 1st century AD and ascribes it to the Celts (Kotlarczyk, 1974). The Celts indeed erected monumental burial mounds (Schlette, 1987, p.24-30) and the presence of Celtic peoples is proven in the area of Cracow (Woźniak, 1970, p.105-149), but the burial rites of the Celts in that territory at that time is very scantly attested (Woźniak, 197-, p.147-149). The possibility that the mound was built at the time of the Migration of Nations and belongs to the German peoples was not examined in Polish archaeology.

I am in agreement with the majority of Polish researchers in attributing the Krakus' Mound to the early-Middle Ages. Against the supposition that the mound was erected at the beginning of our era points the disorderly dispersion of pottery of the Przeworsk culture in different places of the interior of the mound. In spite of Kotlarczyk's doubts as to

the exact place where the Avarian decoration was found, one must admit that it allows for dating the mound as a whole. No proof exists that it was a mistake or a swindle. Thus the mound was built between the 8th and 10th century, when in the upper part of this object the Czech coin was deposited. And it is precisely a time when in Eastern Europe the building of many barrows is observed (Van de Noort, 1993, p.69). The roots of the oak, although intriguing, without physicochemical dating cannot give any basis for definite dating of the mound.

The excavation of the mound reveals some interesting elements: the big pole constituting the axis of this object and the twisted fences stabilizing its constructions. Three main layers forming the mound (the lower of sand covered with loam mantle, the middle one of sand, and the upper mantle including stones) enable us to look for analogies between the Krakus' Mound and, e.g., Tcharnaya Mogila in Tchernigov.

Tcharnaya Mogila was 11 m high, with a diameter of 40 m. There, too, the first and smallest mound was heaped up to a height of 1-1.5 m with a diameter approximately 10 to 15 m. On the top of this mound cremation was performed, as is attested by a big hearth in which some burnt bones remain and remainders of different things. But the most magnificent pieces (such as prettily decorated aurochs horns, cf V. J. Petrukhin, 1995) were placed above, over the next mound heaped up to the height of 7 m. Then the mound was elevated 4 m more (Samokvasov, 1874, p.3-5; Rybakov, 1949, p.24-51; Sedov, 1982, p.253-256). Generally the Krakus' Mound has a similar structure. But no traces of burial or grave were found. However there is no rule that there must be one in every mound. The rules differ. In the mound Hulbishche in Tchernigov the most precious pieces were deposited directly on the hearth (Samokvasov, 1874, p.1-2). We have at least one Arabian account of the Anonymous Relation in ibn Rosteh's version telling that the vessels with the ashes of cremated people were placed "on the hill", i.e. on the burial mound (Lewicki, 1955, p.125; Zoll-Adamikowa, 1975-1979, vol.2, p.180). In that case it is really difficult to find any archaeological remains of the grave.

The vertical post in the axis of the Krakus' Mound also has some analogies. In the Western mound in Gamla Uppsala (Lindquist, 1936, p.147) and in the Southern Mound in Jelling (Roesdahl, 1992, p.162-163; Krogh, 1993, p.259; Andersen, 1994, p.3-9) the traces of similar central posts were found. The traces of some constructions from small pickets and twist branches between them, similar to those from Krakus' mound, were also discovered in the great mounds in Jelling (Krogh 1993, p.174, 178-180).

The analogies between the Krakus' Mound and Tcharnaya Mogila and Scandinavian mounds do not necesarily imply that the mount in Cracow is of Scandinavian origin, as R. Jakimowicz supposed (1934, 23 April). It is rather the case of the presence of some model on a large territory. No important traces of the presence of Scandinavians, as clear as those in Russia, exist in Poland. As J. Żak (1977, p.459) remarks, the territories of Western Slavs in the Viking Period and in the Middle Ages were at the same stage of development as in Scandinavia, were too poor to be spoiled and too strong to be taken in possession. The traces of connections with Scandinavia are scanty, especially on the territory of the Vistulanians. Gustav Kossina (1929, p.105) could point out (following Ekblom) only one village - Warężyn on the inlet of Przemsza river into Vistula - and a mention in Ibrahim ibn Jacob's (ch.3: MPH sn, vol.1, 1946, p.49) account about a Russ (Varangian) and Slavonic merchants travelling from Cracow to Prague with their goods.

A few years ago, in Cracow, a grand hoard of axe-similar iron marks was found; this kind of pre-monetary currency is known from Scandinavia, but in that case it is to be linked with Great Moravia and the zone of exchange of that region (Leciejewicz, 1989, p.133-134).

The ideas of Norse etymologies of the names of Krak and Wanda - although intriguing - at that stage of our knowledge about connections between southern Poland and Scandinavia should be rejected. It is possible to compare Cracowian Krak with e.g. Hrolf Kraki from Hrólfs saga Kraka or other Scandinavian characters bearing that name, but it is better to look for analogies closer by, viz. in the Slavic world, where not only in Polabia and Pomerania but also in Bohemia or even in south-Slavonic territories we can find many personal names as Krak, Krok, Krk and place-names as Krakow, Krakowec. It is possible to recognize in Wanda a Freya-Vanadisa, but it would be still better to explain that name through learned transformation from Wisława to Wandalian Wanda, analogous to the change from Krak to Gracchus.

But the analogy between the charm in Wanda's story in Master Vincent's chronicle and the Norse juridical tripartite formula earth-sky-heaven (cf. Słupecki 1997) is really intriguing. It is also worth adding that, according to the idea of W. Semkowicz (1920, p.143-145), the Lasota Mount, which bears the Krakus' Mound, belonged originally to the Awdańcy family, a Polish kin of Scandinavian origin (with the name derived from Old-Scandinavian auðr - hoard, riches, opulence) and the Lasota Mount take its name from comes Lasota.

To the early-mediaeval and Slavic origin of Krakus' Mound points the significance which gives the Cracowian myth to Krakus' and Wanda's Mounds. Although the mounds appear in written sources only in the 15th century, the village-name Mogiła was written down already at the beginning of the 13th century. Moreover in the 14th century a robbery-digging was done in the Krakus' Mound, and that should mean that someone was looking for the treasure of a distinct person in the interior of the mound. The mound was also considered, exactly like Wanda's Mound, to be a grave. And the mention by Sarnicki (1712, p.1004) is proof that indeed the name Mogiła (grave) was used also for the Krakus' Mound. This leads to the supposition that the robbery digging provided the knowledge about the inner structure of the mound which came to light in Długosz's account.

Both mounds must have played an important role in the symbolical meaning of space in the Cracow region as early as the 11th century. In that century a St Benedict rotunda was built near the Krakus Mound. In the 13th century, beside the Wanda's Mound, a Cistercian Monastery was founded. The foundation of the churches close to the monumental burial mounds can be observed in most important Scandinavian centers, as Gamla Uppsala, Jelling and Borre. The same applies to Tchernigov where close to Tcharnaya Mogila existed the Monastir Eleckiy and not far from the big concentration of smaller barrows around Hulbishche Mound existed the Troickiy Monastir (Samokvasov, 1874, p.2).

The Krakus' and Wanda's Mounds have no documented parallels in Poland. Some big burial mounds in southern Poland (Gąssowski, Gardawski, 1961, p.132) have never been properly investigated. I could only mention a 10 m high mound in Krakuszowice (Słownik Geograficzny, vol. 4, 1883, p. 607) and a few similar objects. So already J.Żurowski (1934, 26 march) kept his reserve about the idea of the Little Poland as an region abounding in that kind of monument. The large mound Salve Regina in Sandomierz appears after the investigation as a natural hill (Buko, 1983). The aim and time of creation of big mounds near Przemyśl (Kopiec Tatarski in Przemyśl, and two mounds in Solca and Komarowice) remained for a long time unclear and these objects were not properly excavated (Machnik, 1971, cf. Kotlarczyk, 1969) till the year 1997. Now, after the new works in the field and in the archival iconographical materials, E. Sosnowska in a still unpublished study comes to

the conclusion that around Kopiec Tatarski in Przemyśl (which was probably in great part a natural hill), some other, artificially built mounds may have been existed.

The Cracovian mounds belong to great mounds, very rare in Europe (with the exception of Western and Eastern Scandinavia, cf. Silver, 1996), called in old German literature Königshügel. According to Michael Müller-Wille they were erected mostly in the second part of the first millennium AD (Muller-Wille, 1992, p.10). They appear sometimes in groups as in Gamla Uppsala (4 big mounds and 3 a somewhat smaller), Borre (9 relatively big mounds) or in Jelling (2 big mounds), sometime single (as Ottarshögen in Swedish Uppland). During the excavations of some of them graves were found, but the others seem to be empty, as the big mound in Romerike (15 m high) where some wooden constructions were found but no traces of any grave (Müller-Wille, 1992, p.10). Usually, as in Gamla Uppsala (Duczko 1993), Borre (Keller 1994; Myhre 1994), Jelling (Krogh 1993, p.26 - in that case considered as bronze age barrows) and in Tchernigov, around the great mounts big concentrations of smaller mounds and barrows appear. Sometimes the new medieval mounds were build alongside the prehistorical barrows or even the prehistorical barrow (as in the case of Sothern Mount in Jelling) could be reused as the foundation for a medieval one (Van de Noort, 1993). In this context, the existence of some barrows around Krakus' Mound on the plan from 1789 is worth stressing. Beside the Tcharnaya Mogila in Tchernigov a small barrow exists, (Samokvasov 1875, p.6) and a mound (levelled in the 19th century) called "Mogila Kniahini Tcharnoy" (Samokvasov, 1875, p.5-6; 1876, p.264).

The Krakus and Wanda's mounds, although both visible one from the other, are divided by a distance of 9 km. It is also impossible to consider these mounds as one group as in Gamla Uppsala or Jelling but they are also not single mounds. A similar situation is to be found in Tchernigov, where at a distance of 700 m from Tcharnaya Mogila the mound Hulbishche appears and three other great mounds accompanied by many smaller barrows (Samokvasov, 1874; 1908, p.189-201). It is however not excluded, as the Swedish plan from 1702 shows, that beside the Cracus mound there existed some other big mounds.

In Scandinavia the existence of a group of monumental burial mounds is considered as proof of the existence of small dynastic kingdoms (Müller-Wille, 1992, p.13). And, indeed, a very important dynastic tradition links them with Gamla Uppsala, Borre and Jelling (Myhre 1994a). A similar phenomenon is to be observed in Russia, where Tchernigov appears in the early "letopisy" (annali) among the most important centers of the country (PVL, year 907), and the voievoda (commander) of the Kievian prince resided there (Petrukhin, 1995, p.1). Following H. Łowmiański (1963-1985, vol.4, p.456-457) we can also stress that the Krakus and Wanda's Mounds should be regarded as one of the most important indications that "in the area of Cracow there existed a significant and permanent center of tribal rule".

The Cracowian mounds, as connected with the Vistulanians, were build relatively late. Similar burial mounds in Jelling were currently dated (with the use of dendrochronology) to the 960s AD (Roesdahl, 1992, p.164). This phenomenon could be explained from the point of view of history of religion as the pagan answer to the expansion of Christianity in the form of the foundation of grandiose grave monuments (for that hypothesis cf Van de Noort, 1993). If this explanation is true (it is not valid for many other mounds, as e.g. in Gamla Uppsala and Borre) so this kind of explanation could be used also for Cracow as a center of pagan Vistulanian state which in the 9th century stood in face of the powerful Christian neighboring country of Great Moravia.

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Abreviations

KLN - Kuryer Literacko-Naukowy
KDKK - Kodeks Dyplomatyczny Katedry Krakowskiej
LB - Liber Beneficiorum
MPH - Monumenta Poloniae Historica
PVL - Povest Vremennykh Let
PSRL - Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisei
sn - series nova
SSS - Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich
ZDM - Zbiór Dyplomów Mogilskich
ZOW - Z Otchłani Wieków

Krakova in Vandina gomila pri Krakovu

Leszek Paweł Słupecki

Obstoj dveh monumentalnih gomil, imenovanih "Kopiec Krakusa" in "Kopiec Wandy", v okolici Krakova, je močan dokaz, da je bil ta kraj v plemenskem obdobju pomembno središče oblasti na Malopoljskem. Eno od osnovnih vprašanj o zgodovini teh gomil je, ali ju je mogoče povezati s knezom Krakom in njegovo hčerko Vando, z osebama iz krakovske legende, ali pa je ta povezava zgolj interpretacija, ki so jo sestavili v 15. stoletju, da bi brezimni gomili povezali z legendarnima osebama. Avtor meni, da je ta povezava starejša od 15. st. in izvira iz izročila, čeprav je krakovska legenda dobila tudi mnogo literarnih sestavin. Poleg motivov, ki so že poznani raziskovalcem, opozarja avtor na trojnost formule "zemlja – nebo – morje" uroka iz krakovske legende, kakršno poznajo tudi staroislandska pravna besedila.

15 metrov visoke Vandine gomile niso nikoli izkopavali. 16 m visoko Krakovo gomilo pa so raziskovali v letih od 1934 do 1937. Čeprav niso našli nobenih bogatih grobov, ki so jih pričakovali, so dala izkopavanja zanimive rezultate. Našli so sledove velikega stebra, ki je tičal sredi gomile, ter sledove ograje iz hrastovih kolov in vrbovega prepleta. Pri notranji zgradbi je bilo mogoče razločiti tri glavne plasti, ki so tvorile gomilo: spodnjo iz peska, ki ga je pokrival glinast plašč, srednjo peščeno in zgornjo, ki je vsebovala kamne. Namen vseh teh konstrukcij je bil stabilizirati gomilo. Krakova gomila je datirana z avarskim pasnim okovom iz 8. st. n. št., ki so ga našli znotraj gomile, in s češkim kovancem iz 10. st., ki so ga našli v zgornjem delu gomile. Prav tako so zasledili roparski vkop iz poznega srednjega veka.

Čeprav so resnično zanimive nekatere podobnosti med krakovskima gomilama ter velikimi gomilami iz Skandinavije in Rusije, avtor meni, da sta Krakova in Vandina gomila slovanskega izvora. Predvideva, da je postavitev obeh monumentalnih gomil v okolico Krakova mogoče razložiti kot poganski odgovor na širjenje krščanstva iz sosednje Velike Moravske v 9. stoletju. s katero se je soočilo središče države poganskih Vistulanov.